

REMARKS

Claims 1-16 are currently pending. Claims 1, 4, and 5 are currently amended. Claims 7-16 are new. Applicants wish to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowability of claims 1-3.

Independent claim 1 is amended to correct grammatical and/or typographical errors.

Independent claims 4 and 5 are amended to more particularly point out that the retractor body has two channels, and wherein each guide member extends through a channel.

No new matter has been added by this amendment.

Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 4-6 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent Application No. 2003/0236447 to Ritland ("Ritland") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,354,995 to Hoffman et al. ("Hoffman"). Applicants respectfully request that these rejections should be withdrawn. Neither Ritland or Hoffman, either singly or in combination, teach, suggest, or disclose a retractor body having two channels, wherein each guide members extends through a channel, as recited in independent claims 4 and 5. This is consistent with the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter on page 3 of the pending Office Action. Thus, Ritland and Hoffman, either singly or in combination, fail to disclose each and every element of independent claims 4 and 5. Applicants therefore respectfully submit that the rejections of these claims should be withdrawn. As claim 6 depends from independent claim 5, the rejection of claim 6 should also be withdrawn, for at least this reason.

New Claims 13-16

Claims 13-16 are new. Applicants respectfully submit that independent claim 13 is allowable over the references of record because, *inter alia*, neither Ritland or Hoffman, either singly or in combination, teach, suggest, or disclose a retractor body having two channels, wherein each guide members extends through a channel, as recited in independent claim 13. As claims 14-16 depend from independent claim 13, Applicants submit that these claims are allowable as well, for at least this reason.

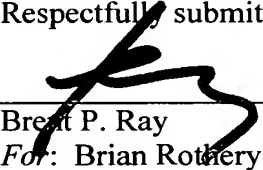
CONCLUSION

It is believed claims 1-16 are in condition for allowance. Should the Examiner not agree with Applicants' position, then a personal or telephonic interview is respectfully requested to discuss any remaining issues.

An estimated claim fee of \$200 is believed due for this Amendment. Please charge this fee, and any additional fee(s) that may be due at this time, to Jones Day Deposit Account No. 503013.

Respectfully submitted,

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